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CONTENTS

	PAGE		PAGE
NOTES OF THE WEEK	189-193	ARGUMENT: ALCOHOL AND TOBACCO—HELP OR HINDRANCE?	199
MOUNTAINS AND MICE, II.—Sir Lionel Haworth, K.B.E.	194	SHORT STORY: MR. BRAMLEY BREAKS OUT—P. K. Kemp	200-201
SONNETS—A. R. Ubsdell	195	A DEFENCE OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS—Sir Frederick Pollock	202
A LUCULLAN CELLAR—H. Warner Allen	195	AS OTHERS SEE US	203
MIGHT-HAVE-BEEN AFFAIRS—C. E. Bechhofer Roberts	196-197	NEW NOVELS, REVIEWS	204-207
RED LETTER DAYS—Guy C. Pollock	197-198	CORRESPONDENCE	208-209
FILMS OF THE WEEK	198	CITY	210
		SUGGESTIONS	212

Notes of the Week

At Ottawa

At the moment of writing (noon, Thursday, August 18, 1932), the Shaitan Rug has not changed hands.

..

The Home Government has decided how many seats in the Provincial Legislatures of India are to be occupied by Hindus, Sikhs, Untouchables and others, including even the humble European.

The Humble European

Whether Mr. Ramsay Macdonald would not have done better to leave well alone may fairly be doubted. "The quarrel" said Sir Lucius O'Trigger "is a very pretty quarrel as it stands." This expressed the sentiments of many, perhaps not less warm friends of India than the Prime Minister, when Hindu and Mussulman failed utterly, in London last year, to come to any agreement. This particular snag—not the only one by any means—had made a hole in the canoe before the voyage started. There was no risk of losing ship and cargo both. If the Indians "themselves had placed an almost insurmountable obstacle in the way of any constitutional development" then let us have no constitutional development. But *diis aliter visum*.

Mr. Ramsay Macdonald and his fellow Olympians have surmounted the insurmountable. With misgivings we wish them luck.

The British Government has published its decision as regards the number of seats to be allotted to Hindu, Mussulman &c.

Our Hand to the Plough

We have set our hands to the plough; we may have to look back.

For the Indian will long look back to the only freedom he ever enjoyed, to the days when Hindu and Mussulman both governed the country, but neither could tyrannise over the other because the game was played with a referee, neither Hindu nor Mussulman, but equally accessible to both, open to reason and deaf to agitation. The rule of the Indian civilian draws to a close. The ballot box with all it brings in its train, intrigue, nepotism, faction and communal strife, is upon us. We cannot stay its course.

..

It will come as a shock to many in England to find that the British Government considers 6 per cent. a sufficient proportion of Europeans in the Provincial Legislatures. In the United Provinces for instance, the ancient political centre of India, out of 228 members, we find 2 Europeans. To this add representatives of Commerce reckoned doubtfully at 2 more. Add the "Anglo-Indian," and still it is but 5. The Anglo-Indian, by the way, is not the inhabitant of Bath and Bayswater, whose anecdotes of the Punjab are avoided at the Clubs, but the Anglo, if

Six per Cent

that is the right word, born and bred in India. His lot under Hindu dominion is like to be hard. But let him rejoice. He is allotted no less than 14 votes in all India out of 1,500. If that does not save him from being turned out of the posts of Railway subordinate on which he subsists, what will?

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The comments of the Indian Press on the decisions of the British Government as to the allot-

"No Consideration" ment of seats in the Provincial Legislatures in India are amusing. "Has His Majesty's Government cast to the winds all considerations of propriety, decency, and political sense?" Yet what has the poor Government done? They collected the politically minded Indians, as many as would come, in London last year. They stood studiously aside. They said to the Hindu and the Mussulman "Settle it your own way. Have joint electorates, or separate electorates." But, as anyone who knows India could have foretold, they could not agree. Now Government has published its own scheme. But it contains the proviso that if, in any province, at this eleventh hour, they can agree on anything else, it will be substituted. Can consideration go farther? Can Folly?

**

Whatever the degree of mental activity and moral force left to that old man, President Hindenburg, he has done what seemed difficult, if not impossible. He has put Hitler in his place.

Littler than Ever Perhaps it was the glamour of the name of Hindenburg, or merely that Hitler overreached himself and drove an otherwise complacent old gentleman into a corner from which there was no escape; or, perhaps, the fires still burn, and the iron is not even painted to look like a lath. At all events, Hitler is not Chancellor, he has lost the first and best chance of some sort of a "putsch," and he seems to be thinking hard. It all makes very little difference to what we or others may expect from Germany. But for Germans themselves, it makes exactly the devil of a difference.

**

The Government have been liberally rewarded for the boldness of their assault on the War Fives.

The National Credit The daring of the scheme undoubtedly put the country on its mettle and succeeded where timidity and hesitation might easily have failed. What is most astonishing of all is that such a result should have been achieved within ten months of the crash. It is a signal tribute to the solidity of the Government's spade work in restoring the national credit. But the chief praise is due to the long-suffering investor.

The Post Office figures are proof that the small holder, to whom the sacrifice was greatest, contributed his mite in the same proportion as the large holder his talent. The tax-payer, who is generally the same person as the War Loan holder, has come to the rescue of the country for the second time in six months; it is surely now the turn of the others.

**

It's an ill wind that blows nobody any good. Undeniably this great frontal attack on the 5 per cent. War Loan could never have been attempted without the cheap credit which is the offspring of depression. Our troubles will thus have left us with at any rate one legacy out of which to rebuild our fortunes. Looking to the more immediate future we now have the satisfactory assurance that the integrity of sterling is henceforth re-established on a firm and visible foundation of confidence.

A Good Foundation But if we are to avoid a setback it is now more urgent than ever that national expenditure should be drastically retrenched. The gains must not be frittered away in unabated extravagance. And the taxpayer is entitled to expect an early hoisting of the "Make-and-mend" signal, or he may soon prove fatally discouraged, if not disabled, from further efforts in the national service.

**

It is impossible to say anything useful about the industrial affairs of Lancashire. Strike and lock-out seem at the moment inevitable, and nothing so bad and mad has been imagined since the General Strike. Indeed, all this is worse because it proves that no one learned anything from the ten days' trial of May, 1926. Yet those ten days—or the first few of them—were the most perilous through which this country has passed, Great War notwithstanding.

We passed through them chiefly because Mr. Ramsay MacDonald and Mr. J. H. Thomas went mad, and we came out whole because they had mistaken entirely the temper of the people of this country. These two did at least learn enough to judge more accurately in October, 1931.

But others? The cotton manufacturers can think of nothing but wage reductions—which is bad psychology. Until they have modernised their methods it is more difficult to bring down rates of pay. The operatives live in the past. If they thought at all they would know that only Canute and Mrs. Partington would oppose more looms to a weaver; if they were not victims of delusion, they would realise that the only alternative to lower wages was the death of their trade.

No one has a monopoly of idiocy. No doubt the employers are behaving foolishly and, probably, the conduct of their business is in many ways inefficient and wasteful. But if Solomon and Mr. Henry Ford managed the industries of England, wages would still have to come down everywhere. Unless they did, Solomon, Ford and Sons would be unable to export with profit. This will still be so whatever Ottawa, Lausanne and other Conferences may achieve or prepare—beyond the expenditure of certain monies. And, after all the "rentier," that contemptible wretch who is the Black Beast of Socialism and the White Hope of prosperity, has had it in the neck. The measure of Conversion is the yardstick of his sacrifice. And yet, however obvious these facts, it is equally obvious not only that the first breath of good business would raise a clamour for high wages, but that reasonable wages won't come without a further loss of export trade.

**

In every country except the United States, where the disease seems endemic, epidemics of criminal violence break out with a certain regularity. The automatic pistol and the motor car have made these appeals to force more sensational and more difficult to deal with, yet a glance at the past suggests that they are seasonal and almost a matter of fashion. This country is passing through one of these periods, and it is noticeable that it coincides with a time of hot weather. Experts in France, where such waves of violent crime are common, have always connected them with the Dog Days.

The Disease of Violence

Just before the war the Paris Apache developed a habit of murdering policemen. They bagged two or three a week, and went on happily, until the policemen began to shoot first, and a cobbler, who armoured his arms with spikes under his sleeves to prevent arrest and killed at least a couple of the defenders of law and order, was guillotined. The game of shooting policemen went out of fashion.

**

Then the motor car offered a new outlet to the murderer. Bonnot and his gang, with a captured grey car, terrorised the suburbs of Paris. For a few glorious weeks they had things their own way. They always shot first, and they cleared a bank at Chantilly of its available cash after killing the clerks. In fact, they played the deuce until they were hunted down. Then they died violent deaths in sensational circumstances, and the ardour of their fellow criminals was damped.

Exemplary Punishment

The moral to be drawn seems to turn on the nature of punishment. The most sentimental humanitarian must surely accept punishment if it is remedial or exemplary. In this country flogging

seems to have a remarkable moral effect. The end of "garrotting" certainly coincided with its application. The guillotine, the bullet and a little lynching scared off the French bandits. The "cat" is the obvious remedy, and if it puts an end to the violence that is endangering the lives of honest men it will justify itself.

**

A correspondent has been favoured with a communication from "Ireland's 'Luckiest' Draw"; at its foot stand the names of a Committee of which His Worship the Mayor of Limerick is Chairman. A green label warns the recipient that a large number of letters are being intercepted, and he is strongly advised to send remittance and counterfoils to a lady who lives in County Kerry. It is all very exciting and suggestive of conspiracy, but things fall flat at the discovery that all these documents and two books of sixpenny tickets—with two free ones in each book, don't forget—are concerned with a draw of which the prizes are to be Irish Sweep Tickets. It is in aid of "a most deserving Limerick Charity" undefined, and there is not a word as to the number of tickets that are to be issued. It seems an expensive and problematic way of buying an Irish Sweep Ticket. However, our correspondent is getting up a lottery of which tickets for "Ireland's 'Luckiest' Draw," with their distant chance of a real Sweep Ticket will be the prizes, but he has not yet decided on an accommodation address.

**

County cricket looks as though it may be saved after all from the reproach of being as tedious as that least of all sports, women's cricket (which they play in Regent's Park and elsewhere with a slow solemnity that rivals a funeral). Science and slow scoring were threatening to kill public interest in the game, which lasts three days and is too infrequently finished, but two or three exhibitions of quick run-getting seem to have livened things up in the pavilions and the press boxes.

Just In Time

Slogging, as we all know, is not necessarily good cricket, but it does produce runs, and runs produce results and results are wanted, even in cricket. Why is Jessop a name to conjure with? Because he hit the ball—hard, high and often, and the public love to see it. Are we so sure that the careful professionals are right and the public wrong in this matter? On the other hand, burlesque cricket, as an example at Bradford on Monday shows, does not attract the crowd, who know the difference between quickness and quackery, between speed and spoof.

A Test match, as we all know, is a difficult matter—it is a ritual, a ceremony, an exhibition. But very often it is an exhibition of bad cricket; for the real spirit of the game to-day one goes to village and second-class county games.

In a world, weary of troubles from which it is impossible to escape, it is refreshing to find a magistrate who has discovered a means of creating a completely new difficulty. A Huddersfield magistrate has discovered that all traffic light signals erected before February, 1932, are illegal. Whether they work well or ill does not concern him. They are just a breach of the law, and every motorist has an inalienable right to mess up the traffic and cause untold loss of time and annoyance to all his fellow men, if he is pleased to ignore the signals. Ye gods! what a useful magistrate!

**

In our issue of June 25, 1932 a contributor under the heading "Music—and Buy British" wrote of "the movement to prevent the engagement, in this country, of certain foreign artists" that "it was fostered in response to the "Buy British" attitude on the part of Viscountess Snowden who, although well-intentioned, was ill-advised enough to attempt to bring politics into music."

We Are Sorry

Lady Snowden has told us that "these statements are not true" and it remains for us to regret both that our contributor should have been misled and that we should have seemed to deal at all unfairly with Lady Snowden's well-known enthusiasm in the cause of music.

**

The Service itself is beginning to react to lay anxiety over the protracted course of operations pursued at Portland to raise the M2. The Admiralty has much to learn in the commission of a permanent rescue staff. And to allay public feeling the First Lord might reasonably issue a statement accounting for the continuing delay. No private corporation could avoid such a course.

The M2 Tragedy

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We are rather sorry for a large number of the children in Birmingham. There has recently been a reorganisation of the local elementary schools which involves many of the pupils changing over from one school to another and thereby having to travel greater distances. That may conceivably be a hardship in some cases. But it does not justify the parents in making ridiculous efforts to organise a "strike" or in inciting their unfortunate offspring to carry banners of protest and parade the City in processions. They are making fools of themselves and their children and making other people wonder just how great is the value of modern education.

Fooling the Children

Speed, no doubt, is not everything. But the fact that England now holds six speed records—
aeroplanes, motor-cars, speed boats, motor cycles, small cars, and railways—is at any rate something to put in the scales against accusations of national decadence and laments of *sic transit gloria mundi*. If we have lost the Atlantic steamship record, and the half-built Cunarder on the Clyde induces melancholy reflections, it is some comfort that we have now many other things.

Not So Slow After All

There is a certain scientific utility too in these records. Commercially they are defensible on the ground that they bring orders, but they also add to engineering knowledge as to strains and stresses of metals, and from that point of view this particular work pays indirectly and in the long run as well as immediately. Whether the general speeding-up of life is socially an advantage is another matter altogether.

**

The conference appointed by the Minister of Transport has just put forward drastic (and unanimous) recommendations in connection with heavy road traffic. These include greatly increased taxation on commercial vehicles and the prohibition of traffic unsuitable to the roads. A further suggestion is that the railways should be relieved of certain of their obligations for the upkeep of bridges and certain roads. The extra taxation which it is proposed should be put on "mechanically propelled vehicles" is estimated at £60,000,000 a year.

A Hint to the Railways

There is a great deal to be said for the recommendations, and there is every reason why the commercial vehicle should pay more. But the real point is that even if they are made to do so the railways must not just sit back and hope for better times. They have been hit hard by bright, enterprising, and in some ways perhaps unfair competition. But they themselves must compete. It is no good for them to be content with wailing about the business that does not come to them. They must go out and get it.

**

The pages of journals devoted to auctioneers' accounts of forthcoming sales of agricultural land are a grim accompaniment to the growing depopulation of rural England. Bearing in mind the direct employment given by large country houses and the rates collected, it is surely worth while in the next budget to lighten the most general cause of the evil, estate duties. Every heir finds he has to pay on a capital value, fictitious and vicious: and unlike a share-sale, costs are a serious addition.

The Cost of Dying

One London agent has over 6,000 estates to sell on his books, mostly since the first Snowden budget of 1930. All over the country this year "the big house" is closed. And death duty returns are so low, relatively to 1928 figures, as to call for courageous re-examination. Mussolini has abolished them—and gained in revenue as well as in contentment.

**

The members of the Society for Pure English, in whose excellent championship of our mother tongue Robert Bridges was a leader, have received as their bonus this year a very learned and ingenious volume on the theory of Speech and Language by Mr. Alan H. Gardiner. It is not addressed only to specialists, but at least one ancient scholar who has not learnt the terms of modern philology tells us he does not feel able to follow the argument in detail, though he fully agrees in the spirit of teaching grammarians and their formulas to know their place. There is one point on which we find no direct light, nor do we know in what book of authority to find it: namely the fundamental proposition, as it seems to us, that the unit of speech is not the word but the sentence.

This is not the less true because a sentence may and in English often does consist of one word, such as Yes—No—Go—Play—Fire. (None of your text-book nonsense about "understanding" or "supplying" other words, please). And it is reinforced by the fact that, as the word has not full effect without the context of the sentence, the sentence has not full effect without the context of such precedent events as in the law are called inducement, which may or may not include speech. Thus Fire! is in itself ambiguous; the circumstances must tell us whether it is an alarm or a military command.

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This dependence of the word on the sentence may seem not to matter very much within the bounds of one language, but when we come to translation it is vital.

The worry of translation

The translator who forgets it is lost. King James I.'s translators were wise men when they protested against the pedantry of supposing that the same Hebrew or Greek word must always be rendered by the same English, and the Revisers too often—let us say fell short of that wisdom. To those who have to translate the more complex idioms of Greek and Latin rhetoric, or of modern literature, it is elementary learning that often nothing short of recasting the whole form will do justice to the intended effect of a sentence. But it may well be that all this will be dealt with in Mr. Gardiner's promised second volume.

Most publishers have cause to share the pious aspiration that the centenary of Bentham will see a fresh effort to define in modern terms the laws of libel. Several "Writing libellous-like" semi-public bodies are struggling with judicial absurdities and legal perversities. Public duty demands comment, especially in a democracy, while stifling laws often prevent fair comment. A jury's caprice is one thing: but a whispering campaign in place of truth expressed by responsible journals is another. Is statutory restatement of main principles too much to seek?

**

The picture pages of some of our daily contemporaries are being expended to unheard of dimensions by telescopic photographs of vast tracts of country. Such bird's-eye views which would stagger the eye of the longest-sighted bird are interesting, but are they beautiful? In the war one was phenomenally concerned by an aeroplane photograph which might show a weak point in the enemy's armour, but no one ever looked upon it as a work of art.

It is passing strange that the eye of the camera should detect trees and fields and hedges *ad infinitum*, but in itself the repetition is dull. How much more exciting to see a single blade of grass through the many facets of an insect's eye! On another page the relative merits of telescope and microscope are discussed in the matter of travel. Surely these vast photographs of distant scenes which have a purely local interest, when someone can pick out a patch of English earth he knows, have had their day and the picture page would be brightened by reproductions of something less extensive and more familiar.

**

The real feature of the Olympic Games has been that hardly anybody has taken sufficient interest in them even to make themselves acquainted with the results. A few odd paragraphs in the newspapers

The Boring Olympiad

have called attention to such things as Hampson's victory, Lord Burghley's defeat, and the throwing of a discus some incredible distance by a young lady who represented the United States, but nobody outside the little groups of specialists has become either worried or excited. The whole affair has been boring, uninspiring and useless. Does anyone really care whether we can run faster than a Japanese or jump higher than a Frenchman? It is more pleasant if we can, but it doesn't matter. The Olympic Games have had their day. No tears will be shed if the affair at Los Angeles turns out to be the last of its kind.

Mountains and Mice—II.

By Sir Lionel Haworth, K.B.E.

ABSTRACT truth is frequently both false and dangerous in application, a fact which is evident in daily life. It is true that we should not wound anyone with a knife; we recognise that a surgeon who wounds his patient is performing an act of the highest merit. Again, restraint of a person is a grave offence; it becomes required by law where criminals and lunatics are concerned.

In the political world this used to be recognised and acted upon: to-day Abstract Truth is an idol which is worshipped. Disarmament! Self-Determination! Liberty! Bow down and worship! A political limb may be gangrenous—there must be no healing cut or treatment: a political entity may be dangerous or anti-social—it must not be restrained.

Thus British Imperialism, which is, in its essence, the restraint of backward peoples or anti-social tribes, is considered a crime. It has been, and is, the means of spreading peace and civilisation through the world, but it is interfering with "Liberty," even though that liberty was only license.

The United States provide the most interesting study of this aspect of Imperialism. They have usurped a country, and have taken it as their own. Gradually, with their numbers, they have swamped out the original owners and placed them in special reserves, because they found that they did not assimilate civilisation and were anti-social in a civilised sense. The question arises: Has their action been for the good of the world? Would we wish the country back in the hands of the Red Indians? What do we stand for? Do we desire civilisation or do we desire to perpetuate nations in uncivilised conditions, with the attendant evils of torture, raid, disease, destruction and slavery, especially of women? The same question arises in Canada, Australia, Africa and all the savage, or semi-savage, countries of the world to which British Imperialism has brought civilised rule.

Control Rule in India

In India, for obvious reasons, we have not followed the American example. We have ruled, through the people of the country, by control. When we took over the country (partly in order to preserve what we owned when the government of the country collapsed, partly out of regard to peace and civilisation—in some cases out of sheer disgust at the conditions prevailing) there is no question that civilised Government, as we should understand it, did not exist.

Does anyone believe that, without British troops, communal disturbances can be kept under control by the Europeanised or the educated Indian? Failing British control, or conquest by some other one power, India must find its new divisions and frontiers by the process normal to

its historical advance, by war; for it must be remembered that, though the Mohammedan and British Empires have to a less and to a greater degree knit the continent together, it is in its essential conditions a continent and not a country, and must inevitably, with the loss of those controls, fall apart.

Are races equal in their development, or power of development, unaided? If not, our policy in Africa is as futile and as certain to fail as our action in India.

Some Awkward Questions

What of disarmament? Is the Hitler movement in Germany a fact? Is the recent statement of General von Schleicher in his broadcast to the German people a fact? If these parties and Governments talk of using force against each other, would they stop at using force against a hereditary enemy if occasion arose? Does anyone possessed of their normal powers of reasoning imagine that this is the moment that France will disarm? And what of the rest of Europe? Are there no other questions which might lead to war?

The Polish corridor? What of Russia? Will she submit to arbitration by countries she calls capitalist? If not, will she disarm? Has Japan accepted arbitration over Manchuria? Will any country accept arbitration on a point vital to her existence as a nation? Is nationality dead? Is it not rather increasing in intensity? These are but a few of the relevant questions at the moment which we choose to talk of disarmament. Let us remember firstly that the Kellogg Pact, which so many nations signed, was but the expression of agreement in a consummation devoutly to be wished (hence nations continue increasing their armaments); secondly, that the condition of opinion on the Continent has not reached the point which it has in England, and that England is the country least vitally affected.

Thus conference after conference fails as our Government and our leaders follow their Will of the Wisp of Abstract Truth. Do we want Disarmament? Do we want Peace? Then let us remember that all political questions are as much equations as the simple equation of mathematics, and the factors are obvious enough. If peace and civilisation are the ends in view, then Abstract Truth is only one factor; others are nationality, condition of historical and educational advance, and religion.

Take the factors and make the correct equation, and successful results are possible up to the values which obtain. Act upon Abstract Truth divorced from the Relative Conditions to which it is to be applied, and failure is as inevitable in the future as it has been in the past.

Above all things, let us think historically.

Three Sonnets

Bad sonnets are written by every youth who dabbles in verse-making; indifferent sonnets, fairly correct in form, scanning, rhyming, and laboured have been written by every educated man under the lash of an emotion. Good sonnets are strange. They belong to poets.

These three sonnets by Mr. A. R. Ubsdell are, we think, good. Not wholly magnificent—Shakespeare, Milton, and Keats are dead. But good not in the sense of a fine line here and there, but in the larger purpose of controlled poetics.—Ed. S. R.

I.

Unutterably are you beautiful;
More than the dawning of a summer day,
More than the night which sweeps the sun away,
Or the deep shadows in a river pool;
And so immeasurably wonderful
I dare not ponder it, or question much
Your look, your voice, the comfort of your touch,
Stirring and yet so infinitely cool.
I had sought far, had gloried in the wind
And in the changing rustle of the trees
And new-born flowers fresh-lacquered with the dew;
And then you came; and I was dumb and blind
To a whole world of men, to all of these,
Because there is none beautiful as you.

II.

How wonderful you are I cannot say,
For when I try, there are but words to use,
Those silly empty-ringing sounds to choose,
To tell of beauty beyond night and day.
How can I tell it with this drab array . . .
Head, hair and nose, and rose-flushed finger-tips,
Soft breasts and arms, bright eyes and laughing lips,
And dimpling knees where little shadows play?
For I should need the songs of all the birds,
The curves of tumbling water, and the one
Far-reaching light of every separate star,
The swiftness of the wild unfettered herds,
The scent of each glad flower that greets the sun,
To tell the world how wonderful you are.

III.

Even as night will follow after day
And run obediently its ordered hours,
Till dawn will wake again the birds and flowers;
As tides the unheard master-voice obey;
Even as buds will heed the hail of May,
And young green leaves spring to the April showers;
As metal Death in tiny cartridge cowers
Till, at a touch, it flies to rip and slay;
So would I answer if you do but call,
For all my happiness is but your pleasure,
Your lightest word, your task however wild,
On listening ears, to greedy hands, will fall . . .
Ask, and I'll give you to the fullest measure,
As biddable as some poor, silly child.

A. R. USDELL.

A Lucullan Cellar

By H. Warner Allen

IT is a commonplace much to be deplored that in this country the cellars of fine wine, which were once the pride of many Englishmen, have become things of the past. Yet they have not wholly disappeared and a friend who is one of the best judges of wine in Europe has just described to me with a view to making my mouth water a private cellar such as millionaires have never known.

It is stocked with the noblest Clarets of pre-phylloxera days, wines aged from 54 to 68 which still retain in their longevity the harmony of perfection. It is enough to make a wine-lover weep for joy to hear of Lafite 1864, the platonic idea of the perfect Claret, 1865, 1870 still robust and full of life and 1874, of Latour of 1874, Léoville of 1865 and 1878, Gruaud-Larose-Sarget of 1868.

These jewels beyond price have never been moved from the bins they were laid in after bottling. Peacefully, and at a perfect temperature, they have matured and ripened. There have been no shocks and sudden changes to try their constitutions and their beauty remains virgin and unspotted by the world for the joy of the wine-lover of a generation which laments that such wines will never be again.

Every connoisseur knows that ancient wines reach undreamed of heights when they ripen in generous quantities. The longevity of certain Roman wines was not unconnected with the vast size of the "amphora." These Clarets of the last golden vintages which any of us are likely to know lie in those Bins of the Blest, sleeping like enchanted princesses, not only in bottles, but in magnums, double magnums and—thing incredible—in Jeroboams.

My correspondent tells me that one evening that cellar offered him Léoville 1878, Larose 1868 and Lafite 1870, and I am glad to think that those noble wines were honoured by his expert palate. The 1878, he writes, was one of the best preserved he had ever tasted, rather light, but sound as a bell. The 1868 was fuller with just a tendency to hardness, but by itself worthy of the verdict "most excellent." The Lafite 1870: for that his vocabulary fails; "velvet," he gasps and leaves it at that.

Nor is Claret the only wine-jewel of that cellar. My friend talks in reverent murmurs of Château Yquem and Latour Blanche; of Sherry and Madeira—several bins 100 years old, some dry and some golden, "too magnificent for words"; of Hocks of 1868, 1886, 1893—Schloss Johannisberg, Rauenthaler, Mareobrunner, Steinberger; of Champagnes of 1884, 1889 (Crémant), 1892, 1893, 1899, 1904, 1906 and 1915 with Still Sillery of 1857, 1865, 1874, still superlatively fine; of a yellow Chartreuse made before 1870; of a Grande Fine Champagne of 1830, pale, light and absolutely unrefreshed.

His letter concludes with the boast that he has been promised one day his share of a magnum of Lafite 1864 and a Jeroboam of Lafite 1865. Was ever connoisseur more blest?

Might-Have-Been Affairs

The End of Ireland. By C. E. Bechhofer Roberts

LONG weeks of cloud, of mist, of driving rain were forgotten overnight when the seventeenth day of August, 1935, dawned over Ireland with blue skies and almost tropical sunshine. A simple-hearted peasant boy—Seumas O'Reilly was his name—waved farewell to his mother as he trudged down the white road that led from the hamlet of Ballymachannery, Co. Kerry, to the neighbouring seaside township of Portmagee. His heart was light, for only the previous evening he had marked another notch in the barrel of his rifle before oiling it and replacing it in the thatch; he had accomplished a long-delayed act of justice by ambushing a tax-collector who for many weeks had pestered his mother for arrears of payment under the Land Annuities Act. Seumas knew that the world was cleaner, the birds sang more sweetly, and the little waves danced more happily on the shore for the passing of this local symbol of Saxon tyranny.

It was historic soil he trod, dear to the ears of all Irishmen from the melodious stanzas of Patrick O'Shea, greatest of the gazetteer-patriotic of Gaelic poetry. Perhaps Seumas sang O'Shea's verses as he walked so blithely through the bog; if he did (and, alas, we shall never know now), it was probably this one, which I quote from the English translation of Professor Kuno Meyer, who venerated the Gaelic muse as only a German Anglophobe can:

The two-fifteen from Portmagee,
Via Kailclogh, Cahersiveen—
Sinn Fein, Sinn Fein, was it you?
Reaches Watervil at half-past three,
And Darrynane, and Sneem,
And Parknasilla (change for Kenmare),
And Bolus Head and Deen—
Dail Eireann, were you there?—
And Doulus Head, and Cahermore,
At twenty-five past four—
Thus sang the dark-eyed *bohaleen*.

Refreshing himself from a flask of the admirable potheen which his mother distilled in the recesses of her cottage—no slave to tyranny she!—Seumas looked out over the waters of the great ocean. All seemed well: the boy watched the lobster poachers at work, crooning as they emptied their neighbours' catch into their boats; an armoured speed-boat threw wide ripples across the bay as an admiral of the Irish Republican Army rushed a cargo of portable machine-guns to the mainland from his island hoard; cormorants dived to feed on the corpse of a customs-officer who, only the week before, had met well-merited death at the hands of Seumas's benevolent uncles. Everywhere the glory of Free State tranquillity gilded the fair handiwork of Nature.

But suddenly Seumas started, raised his hand to shield his eyes and stared far out to sea. What was that barrier that seemed to rise out of the calm waters, growing larger every moment? He seized his field-glasses and gazed through them with wondering eyes; then his revolver flashed in his hand and he uneasily fingered the bombs at his belt. But soon he realized that this was no ordinary incident, to be confronted with the everyday tools of the Free State peasant. It was a tidal wave!

At this point Seumas O'Reilly passes out of history; we know his fate only from the evidence of one of the lobster-catchers, who, by some freak of the catastrophe, survived the dreadful onslaught of the ocean. Seumas was swept away by the towering rush of green water, only a few seconds before his dear mother's cottage perished too with all its contents, even to the little hoard of tear-shells that she had garnered, one by one, with devoted care from the wreck of a German submarine. Greater figures now enter our chronicle.

"Ersing" the Horses

Mr. De Valera in Dublin heard the news of the tidal wave just as he was setting out for the Dail to introduce a bill insisting that all the names of the horses in the Dublin Hospital Sweepstakes on English races should be translated into Erse and referred to solely by their Irish names. The President at once changed his plans, telephoned for an aeroplane and flew towards the menaced counties. Landing at Limerick, he briefly addressed the local journalists. "I who fought in Easter Week," he said, "and who have ever since repelled the murderous onslaughts of the English Cromwells and Thomases am not to be intimidated by a mere natural phenomenon. I have come here to take charge in person of the measures necessary to save my adopted country from danger and disorder!" Mr. De Valera then re-entered the plane and, after surveying the floods which, by that time, had submerged most of Kerry, Cork and Limerick, flew back to Dublin.

He there described to the Dail the ravages of the tidal wave and demanded special powers to meet the new emergency. In particular he insisted on being given authority to close all Irish ports to English vessels, whether engaged in trade or the salvage of life and property; Mr. Norton, the leader of the Irish Labour party, said that he and his followers totally disapproved of these measures but would vote for them rather than embarrass the Government in its desire to alleviate the misfortunes of the industrial population of the South-West. Mr. Cosgrave, for the Opposition, said that Mr. De

Valera's bullying intransigence was the direct cause of the disaster; though the Opposition was certain to be outvoted in the Dan, he said, it could at least rejoice that the Senate's veto would delay the operation of the new bills by eighteen months, by which time he felt certain that the commonsense of the Irish people would have found better ways to overcome the tidal wave. Mr. De Valera then drove out to the aerodrome and embarked for London.

Meanwhile the floods advanced during the afternoon as far as Athlone, where another tidal wave from the North-West came into contact with them. By nightfall the whole of the western portion of the island was under water and thousands of refugees were pouring into Longford, Westmeath and King's County.

As soon as this good news reached Mr. De Valera, who had gone on from London to make a pilgrimage to Lincoln Jail, where so many brave Irishmen were interned during the Troubles, he sent the organisers a telegram of warm congratulation.

During the night the floods still rose. A meeting of intercession was convened on College Green by representatives of both Catholic and Protestant churches and was attended by a hastily summoned concourse of priests and parsons from all over the island. Though the proceedings were somewhat disturbed by fights between members of the rival congregations, united prayers were offered up that, if some loss of life were inevitable, it should at least fall less heavily on the Christian than on other communities. Unfortunately the fulfilment of this prayer was balked by the fact that the entire Jewish population of the Free State had already boarded liners sent specially to Kingstown by their English co-religionists.

True to the despicable doctrine that Ireland's peril is England's opportunity, the British Government mobilised every vessel lying in harbour and, by wireless, every other vessel within steaming range and sent them to Irish ports to take refugees on board. This dastardly manœuvre was quickly circumvented by Mr. De Valera, who telegraphed from Berlin, where he had gone to lay a

wreath on Professor Kuno Meyer's grave, that no boat should be allowed to enter any Free State port unless its entire complement of officers and crew were of Irish birth and held loyal political views.

The ships, numbering several hundreds, made many efforts to disobey the Free State prohibition, but were kept at bay by the well-directed fire of hastily armed volunteers directed by members of Mr. De Valera's Cabinet.

A certain number of less patriotic Dubliners, despairing of salvation by other channels, endeavoured during the night to cross the Ulster border. They had heard, correctly, that the government of Northern Ireland, foreseeing for some years the possibility of a national calamity, had caused to be built all round its territory a vast dyke, which would impose an impassable barrier to the floods. As soon as the news of this migration reached Mr. De Valera, he cabled that Free State guards should line the Free State border and pick off any refugees who attempted to cross it to Ulster.

By noon on August 19th the floods reached the outskirts of Dublin, and the whole of the rest of the Free State, except, of course, the mountains, was under water. The Free State leaders bowed to the inevitable. With a last impassioned cry of love for Ireland and hatred for England, Mr. De Valera's followers in the Dail marched down in a body to the quay and boarded three trawlers which had run the blockade swiftly thrown overboard so that they should not fall into the hands of tyrants or traitors.

Mr. De Valera himself flew in his aeroplane over the ships as they reached the open sea and raised his hat in unemotional acknowledgement of the cheers of the passengers. He flashed a last enheartening message to those compatriots whom, from his vantage-point in the skies, he could see huddling together on the high ground that was not yet covered by the rising floods. "You perish," he told them, "that Ireland may live. May your last moments—which, it is anticipated, will occur in about eight hours—be exhilarated by the knowledge that I still live and, with me, the hope, nay, the certainty of a more glorious Ireland than that in which you are privileged to perish."

Red Letter Days

The Reason for the Colour of the Ink. By Guy C. Pollock

IT is difficult, when one comes to count Red Letter Days, to find a measure by which to judge them. There are so many, and, before some court of appeal, so few. When you turn the mind to sport, and turn over the pages of a game book or the threads of memory, there is scarcely a day, however rotten the weather or poor the bag or indifferent the skill, that is not redeemed from dullness. Memory only counts the hours that are serene and the notes in a game book dismiss curtly the things that are not highly agreeable.

Did a day in July on the Test belong to Red Letters? It was an unexampled day. The sun

shone gloriously without being oppressive, there was an adequate and persistent hatch of Fly, and something had gone most wonderfully wrong with the trout. Jupiter, who desired their destruction, had made them previously mad. All the next-best trout in a perfectly lovely stretch of the upper Test were feeding, and, directly a tiny olive was floated with any degree of accuracy over any one of these fish, he came up, swallowed it, allowed himself to be struck, hardly ever succeeded in plunging deep into a weed bed, and very seldom got away.

(Continued on p. 198.)

A wonderful day, and I shall not easily forget it, even when memory grows deceitful. But a Red Letter Day? Not really, I think.

More like Red Letters was a day on the Itchen, on that rather terribly alluring water of which Lord Grey wrote much of his classic. And that because three rods in the morning could do absolutely nothing with one of the most persistent and furious rises I have ever seen. I with Another planted myself on one enchanting piece of water, and at about half-past eleven—again in July—the rise began. Every fish in or near one lovely deep run between weed beds was feeding ravenously. The thing looked too easy.

Utterly Baffling

We thought "slaughter" if we did not say it, and set to work. Nothing—we each tried every conceivable and even inconceivable fly—would much move those trout. Nothing would put them down even for a moment. She rose two fish, each with a different fly, and each once only and half-heartedly. I hit one a horrid jab in the jaw, and, presumably, ought to have hooked him. The third rod, our host joined us at one o'clock for lunch, having equalled our experience exactly half a mile further downstream. And then the frantic feast was brought to a sudden end. And we mopped our brows and ate our lunch in almost sullen silence.

That was very nearly a Red Letter Day, because of the utter bafflement of it.

It is not, I think, that one gets tired of catching fish or sated with shooting birds. But the first thrill to vanish is the more primitive thrill, and something more is needed for Red Letters. What is it? What about the day on a Welsh lake that I remember by the thunderstorm? Or the war-time day in Essex that is memorable by the runner brought by the original Judy?

Judy's Pheasant

That episode, of course, made the letters red. When she crossed the river for the cock pheasant that had been dropped stone dead, as we all thought, on the opposite bank, and made straight across the field to another wood and disappeared for ten minutes, the others consoled with me on her familiar wildness and made me murderous by advice to have her put under—to send Judy to execution, may Heaven forgive their mean and petty souls! But when my black creature appeared with the bird, whined a little on the far bank, shifted it to a more secure hold, swam across and presented me with a large cock pheasant with a wing just tipped, she became the marvel that I knew she could be if she chose.

Anyhow, that's not a fair example. It is too obvious. It may be just one gleam of sunshine on a hill, or a mist lifting suddenly on a moor, or the glimpse of a fox cub at play, or a brown squirrel leaping from bole to bough, or a smile on certain lips or a few hours of friendship and companionship, or just any old thing that seals the wax of memory. You can't diagnose or determine. But here were red letters and there were not. And they always refer to the past.

FILMS

BY MARK FORREST.

Congorilla. Produced by Mr. and Mrs. Martin Johnson. Marble Arch Pavilion.

The Man from Yesterday. Directed by Berthold Viertel. Plaza.

THE commentary is the drawback to pictures made by Mr. and Mrs. Martin Johnson, though the remarks and the asides which accompany "Congorilla," their new picture at the Marble Arch Pavilion, are not so irritating as those in their previous film, "Jungle Hell."

As the title suggests the main object of the expedition is to photograph gorillas in the Congo, but before the Johnsons arrive at the haunt of these animals, which are in the Alumbongo mountains in the Belgian Congo, over three-quarters of the film has been shown. In those three-quarters there is a section dealing with the pigmies of the Ituri forest.

The tribe's sole means of existence is the ivory trade; the primitive methods of its pursuit will make the mouths of the big business men water, nevertheless the nature of the forest should ensure the continuance of the present ways and preserve the happiness of the "children" engaged in it.

"The Man From Yesterday," at the Plaza, contains a stronger and more human story than the majority which have lately done duty for plots in Hollywood. True it is by no means a new complication and those who have suffered with "Enoch Arden" will renew their agonies. The opening is laid in Paris during the war and the director, Mr. Viertel, whose work throughout is very sound, has managed to convey the atmosphere with great felicity.

During an air raid an English officer, played by Clive Brook, marries a young girl, the lovely Claudette Colbert, and that accomplished returns to the battle where he is hit by a gas shell and left for dead. Claudette Colbert, who is nursing, receives unofficial news of his death and, when the war is over, goes away with the French surgeon in whose hospital she has worked. Convinced that her husband is really dead she is about to marry the surgeon when Clive Brook reappears. Her love for the surgeon and her duty towards her husband are in conflict; she chooses the latter and in the end enjoys the former because Clive Brook kills himself to make way for the other man.

The dialogue is simple and the acting, sincere. As a rule Clive Brook's wooden personality does not enhance a story, but this film suits him much better than "Shanghai Express" and he makes a good impression, which is heightened by the boisterous characterisation lent to his American friend by Andy Devine. The real performances come from Claudette Colbert and Charles Boyer. Claudette Colbert's emotional passages are played with a very sure touch and Charles Boyer manages to bolster up the difficult part of the surgeon so that the audience feels as much sympathy for him as it does for Clive Brook.

THIS WEEK'S ARGUMENT

Alcohol and Tobacco—Help or Hindrance ?

Help—By W. ECHALAZ.

NO psychological expert has yet ventured to face the outcry of universal stupidity by writing on the psychological value of alcohol; yet it may be doubted whether there is a single one who does not tacitly admit its power for good. Like all things potent and beneficial, religion, for instance, it is dangerous.

Humanity has inherited and developed nothing more devastating than intellect. Yet the fact remains "in vino veritas," and it is only those afraid of the truth who are afraid of wine. In our cups we are ourselves, and, if our "selves" are unpleasant, the quicker we improve them the better, but we shall not re-form them by smothering them up again in quotidian complacency and avoiding the drink that throws an inward searchlight.

Most people in this world are far better than their surface "selves." Underneath they are less mean, less opinionated, less silly than the absurd personalities in which they are dressed up, when they walk about in ordinary life. Given the right amount of alcohol, they will become generous, open-minded, almost wise. It would be impossible to compute the noble actions that have been accomplished under the stimulus of alcohol, which enabled the true self to express itself in action. They outnumber incalculably all the bad that is due to the evil of the self behind or that excess which makes a drunken man temporarily as insane as a religious maniac.

Doctors who have experimented with pure alcohol and distilled water argue that a man who has taken this hideous mixture is not so efficient in some specified thing as if he had consumed lemonade. They admit that even this horrible beverage whips up a man's energies at the critical moment, and rely on the reaction for their condemnation of alcohol. How often in a man's life does it happen that he needs all his faculties for a minute or two to reach his goal: that achieved, it matters not two straws that he should collapse.

The present age is an epoch of inhibitions and shyness. Alcohol, when taken in the form of good wine, breaks down the hard crust of consciousness, which hides and paralyses the goodness within. Many a man will do himself justice after half a bottle of wine, though he would be mute and sheep-like on barley water. Alcohol by itself is just a medicine; wine is a gift of the gods making glad the heart of man.

As for tobacco, I am rather at a loss in this argument, because, so far, I am not aware that it is in any way deleterious. It is soothing and helpful in a pipe, luxurious in a cigar, and, if anyone thinks the world so full of pleasures that he can afford to cut it off, on his head be it.

Teetotaller and non-smoker alike should remember the warning: "Beware of the man who has only one vice."

Hindrance—By CECIL HERRIES.

I HAVE just come back after lunching with a man of letters. We began with a cocktail, we then discussed some admirable food along with the migration of birds, the cruelty of sport, the literary styles of Lamb and Hazlett, the art of fly-fishing, the effect on rowing of the introduction of the sliding seat, the demerits of public schools, despatches from Ottawa, the beauties of Wales and the personal characteristics of several friends whom we had in common. And we washed it all down with a Liebfraumilch of 1921—at his expense. Then we lit our cigarettes to make the coffee taste better. Ah!

So you think I have given away my case? And do you imagine, perhaps, that because the sinful lusts of the flesh, the pomps and vanities of this wicked world are admittedly attractive to me, they are the less reprehensible thereby?

Of course not. Equally, of course, I neither believe nor pretend that the restrained enjoyment of alcohol and tobacco—which are both extremely enjoyable—is evil or degrading. What I am concerned to do is to assert that body and brain work much better without them.

Alcohol in the form of spirits is a sudden and powerful but evanescent stimulant; in the form of wine a slightly stimulant sedative. Tobacco is almost purely a narcotic and—very slightly—an excitation. When you have had one glass too much of wine your amour of reserve is pierced; one whisky-and-soda too much extracts such morose pugnacity as may reside within you.

As for tobacco, an occasional cigarette, or three or four pipes a day just turn the edge of your nervous force and impair agreeably the activity of your brain. But it seldom stops at that. The great majority of men and women who use tobacco smoke excessively. Without any tobacco they would be wretched for a month and ever afterwards, their health greatly improved in trivial ways, they would find bodies and brains working much more actively and persistently without that laboriously inflicted spur, which, as smokers, they find necessary.

A rule of no alcohol and no tobacco would deprive the first uprising of the day of its discomforts; it would free for men's use the natural energies which have been choked and clouded. It would bring us back some way towards the greater freedom of youth.

Alcohol and tobacco are definitely, unquestionably, a hindrance. They give us furred tongues, unwhitened teeth, sluggish livers, stained fingers, lazy muscles and a bored intelligence.

They are both extremely agreeable and it would be a waste of pain and grief to limit one's consumption to an allowance that merely whetted the appetite. Therefore give them up—if you dare.

SHORT STORY

Mr. Bramley Breaks Out—By P. K. Kemp

TO the casual observer, the Duchess Rooms differed in no respect from a score of other places. It was filled every night with a crowd of dancers who paraded round the room with a supercilious air of extreme boredom and an indifferent supper was obtainable at a price of about three times its value. Definitely, it was one of the places where the Londoner revelled at night.

As a matter of fact, though, the Duchess Rooms were unique. There were few people throughout the whole country who were not acquainted with the name, and indeed the noise, of Hal Stuart's Duchess Doughboys, as broadcast every Saturday night. To the London that dances, they were the last word in orchestras.

The dance had just ended with the saxophone's wail in a minor key and Hal Stuart, turning round, bowed left, right and centre, smiled his famous smile and sat down. The Doughboys too, sat down, some to talk in hushed whispers, some to collect up the scores and some, these the elder Doughboys, to lean back in their chairs, close their eyes and give their faces a chance to recover from the mechanical expression of gaiety that they were expected to display during the actual playing of the dance.

Behind the trombones and cornets and next to the bass saxophone, Mr. Sidney Bramley, of Balham, euphonium player in Hal Stuart's Duchess Doughboys, turned his instrument upside down and watched interestedly the few drops of spittle fall into the already formed little puddle at his feet. This ceremony fascinated him nightly and he had grown to be surprisingly accurate in the calculation of the passage of time by the size of the puddle.

Mr. Bramley was an artist on the euphonium. He could put more feeling into one of the "oom-pahs" which his instrument emitted than many another could coax from an old fiddle. But in spite of this, Life had left him a disappointed man because, for some reason he could never fathom, the euphonium was the most neglected of all instruments. Many of the composers forgot about it altogether.

But in "The Hero of Balham" Mr. Bramley used to come into his own again. Amongst the little coterie of friends who used to collect there every evening to refresh themselves after the day's work, he was the recognised authority on all matters musical. His advice was freely asked about the latest gramophone records and, since the Doughboys had once made a tour of the music halls, his opinion as to the various turns which came to the Balham Hippodrome was listened to with respect.

But even in this environment, Mr. Bramley felt himself not entirely treated with all the deference that was his due. There were rival authorities.

The dancers in the Duchess Rooms were circling slowly on the crowded floor to the very latest waltz. It had nearly lasted its appointed time and the tenor saxophonist was drawing in his breath for the final wail.

Hal Stuart smiled his famous smile and bowed his three times to the well-bred, spasmodic applause, while Mr. Bramley watched his drops of spittle swell the little puddle he had already made. From its size he calculated the time as half past eleven and he thought mournfully of the three hours' playing still in front of him. He turned over the pages of the score and contemplated idly the blues next on the list. Not many "oom-pahs" there, he decided, and hid his disappointment in the further contemplation of his puddle.

Hal Stuart was announcing, in the broad American accent he had acquired as a publicity asset: "Waal, folks, we guys are now going to play for you a blues entitled 'Sauntering in the Sunshine with Sally'." The Doughboys assumed their respective expressions of gaiety and the dance started with a roll from the trap drums. Mr. Bramley licked his lips, pursed them, and putting his tongue between his teeth, emitted the first of his "oom-pahs." Hal Stuart, doing a few steps of the dance, took the tenor saxophone from the hands of its grinning player and blew a few fanciful notes to the visible and audible delight of the dancers. The Doughboys were now getting into their stride and living up to their reputation of being the hottest orchestra in the town. The trap drummer, not to be outdone, threw his drumsticks spinning into the air and, catching them again, beat a light tattoo on the head of the Doughboy sitting in front of him. Hal Stuart smiled his appreciation of this gymnastic feat, but at the same time his smile warned the drummer that a repetition would be unnecessary. Too much by-play, in his opinion, might distract attention from himself and that could not, in any circumstances, be allowed.

Mr. Bramley caught the first part of the smile but missed the second and, taking a deep breath, sought further to enlighten the tune by a loud and misplaced "oom-pah." The orchestra faltered momentarily but being well-trained, picked up the tune again almost instantaneously and their grin showed only too plainly that the "oom-pah" was not an error of judgment but was put in there on purpose.

Some bud of self-expression in Mr. Bramley seemed suddenly to burst into flower and, carried away by the first "oom-pah," he tried another and yet another. The Doughboys, thoroughly rattled now by this torrent of sound, looked to Hal Stuart for guidance, saw his famous smile, saw behind it the glint of anger, saw his warning to carry it off and decided to play on as though this mad spate of

"oom-pahs" were the most natural thing in the world. For by now they were coming thick and fast. Mr. Bramley had lost all sense of proportion and was revelling in this unforeseen and unpremeditated chance of showing his prowess. He wove patterns of music that inspired him to still further heights, so that he dominated the orchestra and filled the Duchess Rooms with the melodious notes of his instrument. Under his influence, "Sauntering in the Sunshine with Sally" became an epic paean of glory, a song of freedom of a soul coming at long last into its own. Unfettered and unrestrained, Mr. Bramley's euphonium gave forth its message of liberty to the Duchess Rooms and the wild urge of expression which had seized him soared unchecked with his most volcanic notes. It was superb.

The tune was approaching its end and with a deep sigh of relief, Hal Stuart guided the Doughboys into the last bars. He glared at Mr. Bramley, his anger making him incapable of keeping on his face the smile he owed to his audience. Not for one more night, not even for one more dance, he decided, would he allow Mr. Bramley to remain a Doughboy. He could pick up euphonium players for two a penny anywhere and only too glad of the chance of becoming one of the famous Doughboys.

Some inkling of his impending fate must have pierced Mr. Bramley's consciousness, for with a suddenness that was even more pronounced than his original breaking forth into noise, his torrent of "oom-pahs" ceased. He felt a little dizzy and sick and rather unsteady. But the elation was still with him and he gloried in his achievement.

The tenor saxophonist drew in his breath for the final wail. The Doughboys ceased playing and the last note commenced its journey round the room. It was too much for Mr. Bramley. Seizing his instrument, he put it to his lips and produced the loudest, most glorious and most magnificent "oom-pah" he had ever played. The two notes died together and Mr. Bramley dropped exhausted into his chair.

Hal Stuart turned, smiled to the dancers and bowed his three times. It was curious, but three bows were usually sufficient. He bowed again three times and still the applause did not stop. They were standing round, laughing, clapping, shouting for an encore. Gone was all pretence at boredom now. It began to dawn on him that his euphonium player was not so bad as he had thought. The applause continued, louder than ever. The reflected glory went to his head and picking his way through the players, he went over to Mr. Bramley and slapped him on the back.

"Great work, lad," he said. "Can you do it again?"

Mr. Bramley nodded and Hal Stuart tapped his music stand.

"Same again, lads," he cried and in his excitement he forgot his American accent.

So once again Mr. Bramley "oom-pahed" to his heart's content and once again the applause broke out in unrestrained enthusiasm.

The following evening at "The Hero of Balham," Mr. Bramley explained to the coterie of friends the reason for the phenomenal success of Hal Stuart's Duchess Doughboys. It depended, he said, on those Doughboys who showed sufficient genius to be able to lift a tune from its normal surroundings and endow it with a halo of novelty.

He explained further. Modestly, he told them of his own success the previous evening and painted in somewhat subdued colouring a picture of himself playing an euphonium solo which had revolutionised the Duchess Rooms.

At this stage he felt it incumbent upon him to stand a round of drinks. Under the mellow influence of the beer, he expanded. He touched upon the colouring of the picture he had painted until the gratified group saw him as the central figure of a vast orchestra, playing a magnificent euphonium obbligato amidst the subdued accompaniment of all the other instruments. A minute Hal Stuart waved his baton, more, one felt, by the gracious condescension of Mr. Bramley than for any real need of conducting.

Under the influence of a second drink, he touched on the material benefits which he expected to accrue to him as the fruits of his genius. Royalties, he explained, were tricky things to the uninitiated, but they could run into vast sums for those who understood them. They ran into vast sums now and when it was time for him to leave "The Hero of Balham" to attend the evening session at the Duchess Rooms, he was drawing such a fabulous amount that he was seriously considering retiring, buying a large car and a small house in the suburbs.

The applause that night following Mr. Bramley's version of "Sauntering in the Sunshine with Sally" was terrific and an encore was demanded and played. The night after that, it was certainly gratifying and though an encore was played, it had not been so insisted on as before. And though on the fourth night an encore was not played, there were still a few people who had asked for it. After that, the applause gradually resumed its well bred, quiet dimensions.

There comes an end to all good things, and fashions in dance tunes alter even more quickly than do fashions in women's clothes. Before a fortnight was over, "Sauntering in the Sunshine with Sally" had died and was buried. Mr. Bramley did indeed suggest adapting its successor, "When my Sugar swings her Hammock," but Hal Stuart decided that it would be a pity to spoil its haunting melody with Mr. Bramley's ornamentation, and professional jealousy on the part of the other Doughboys approved his veto.

* * *

Behind the trombones and cornets and next to the bass saxophone, Mr. Sidney Bramley, still euphonium player in Hal Stuart's Duchess Doughboys, played the approved number of "oom-pahs" as selected by the dance composers, still with feeling, still with verve. But his heart was not really in his work now. He had left it behind, sauntering in the sunshine with Sally.

A Defence of the League of Nations

By Sir Frederick Pollock

The League Year-Book 1932: first annual edition, ed. Judith Jackson and Stephen King-Hall. London: Ivor Nicholson and Watson Ltd. La. 8vo. xiv and 590 pp. 12s. 6d.

THE League here named is the League of Nations. Sir Eric Drummond, the outgoing Secretary-General, gives it an introductory blessing and finds in it (though not speaking officially) "an admirable and reasonably complete view of the organisation and work of the League." Hitherto no such view was to be found between the covers of any one book, and it will be of great value not only for practical reference, but as containing—or constituting by its very existence—the refutation of much idle, captious and even dishonest censure to which the League has been subject ever since its formation.

There was no reason to expect the Covenant of the League or its operation to be more generally popular than the Ten Commandments or the commands or exhortations of any divine or human law. If the League had failed to have enemies it could have done so only by failing to do anything.

The Difficult Groups

It had for downright enemies to begin with, the militants, not yet extinct, who do not desire to see wars abolished or abated, and the purveyors of war ships, guns and munitions who are afraid of peace spoiling their trade, and whose mischievous activity behind the scenes is little known to the simple-minded public. On the other side are the militant pacifists who want to see war and weapons of war done away with out of hand, and dream that their good words are of strength to keep the peace of the world without a constable. Then there are various faddists with various formulas who cannot understand that reasonable men may honestly entertain doubts of their omniscience.

Finally the League gets its full share of the guerilla warfare waged against the whole world by born *frondeurs* and pessimists, not fools, but perversely clever, whom nothing in heaven or earth will please. A kindred sect, happily too small to be dangerous, is that of the precisians who will accept no form of words not framed by themselves, and unless they repent betimes will imperil their souls at the last day by offering to amend Gabriel's minutes of judgment.

Besides all these there are disappointed and mildly grumbling friends who mean well but know nothing about the conduct of public business.

Without some personal experience of committee work it is hard to realise the difficulty of bringing half a dozen members of any committee, even when they are of one speech and have a common tradition of procedure, to agree on a definite conclusion in anything beyond routine, unless indeed there is some strong external reason for dispatch. With such experience one is less inclined to complain of delay in the League's business, which is done by a system of committees from the Council downwards,

and moreover cosmopolitan ones, than to admire the quantity and quality of the results obtained under the given conditions.

It is almost common form among the critics to charge the League with making default in the fulfilment of wholly imaginary promises. The League never undertook to make war impossible, much less armed conflict in the course of civil dissensions, or irregular fighting in a no man's land.

It did undertake to make wars of ambition manifestly too risky for prudent rulers to embark upon, to nip local strife in the bud or at least prevent it from spreading, and to remove excuses for war formerly held allowable by providing a competent and impartial tribunal for the settlement of international disputes; and all this it has done.

One of its first acts was to compose a difference between Sweden and Finland which, according to the older fashion, had all the makings of a very good war and might easily have involved all the Northern Powers. Yet the other day many worthy persons were genuinely surprised and shocked because the League could not, by a stroke of the pen, order combatants thousands of miles away, not waging regular war in point of form, and actuated by complex and obscure causes, to lay down their arms forthwith.

There are still occasions when the presence of British and American admirals with their ships (for somehow they are apt to be found acting in concert whatever their governments may be talking) is more persuasive than resolutions and dispatches. It cannot be denied that some real mistakes have been made; the wonder is that they have been so few.

The Mandate System

Another trick of the grumblers is to ignore the offshoots and auxiliaries of the League and the beneficial work they are quietly doing. Happily the necessary information about them is clearly set out in this book. These organs are not mere branches of the League, but rather of co-ordinate rank; the founders wisely avoided centralising them. In their own spheres they are largely autonomous, and the higher control is only of a general kind. The ingenious and elastic system of Mandates—none the worse for being a puzzle to the formalists of international law—has provided a working solution, dimly foreshadowed by the "spheres of influence" known before the War, for intricate and troublesome problems.

The index is full and businesslike, but we miss the name of Brazil, the one Power that has permanently resigned from the League; the fact is duly noted in the list of members at the very head of the text. Such little slips are easily remedied in the next issue.

To sum up the moral, the League of Nations is not yet a perfect instrument for securing peace, but it is the only one we have, it is capable of improvement, and meanwhile it is good enough to work with. As the late M. Albert Thomas said, faith and determination are the things needful.

As Others See Us

A GLANCE at the world shows that a common language, blood relationship, and proximity do not make for amity among nations. It is at least arguable that a universal language would create universal hatred. A little knowledge is a dangerous thing, and it is far easier to observe the vices and virtues we dislike in cousins who live near us when they are unhidden by the mist of a foreign language.

The Latin nations find it extremely difficult to understand one another. The Spaniard has little good to say of his South American kinsman, and it must be confessed that this country and the United States do not always see eye to eye.

In "England Muddles Through" (Macmillan, 7s. 6d.), Mr. Scarborough studies with an acute and sympathetic eye the English character and English problems. He knows us thoroughly, and perhaps is inclined to extenuate some of our failings, though his smiling criticism does not lack severity. It is a book that every Englishman who wants to know himself and his fellow countrymen should read.

The Root of the Problem

At the end in an all too brief chapter he discusses Anglo-American relations, but he scarcely seems to have reached the root of the difficulties which have to be overcome. The essence of the problem is psychological. Some years ago I had a close American friend and our friendship used to fill us with mutual amazement. In nearly everything we said, the one emphasised and dealt at length with just those points which the other passed over in silence as unworthy of mention.

Once during the war I was detailed to take a young American to a section of the French front. We started in a car on a miserable night long before dawn with an interminable journey before us. I had only one desire, to make myself as comfortable as I could and sleep. My companion, on the other hand, would talk to me and his conversation grew more feverish and spasmodic, as my answers grew rarer and shorter.

At last about the hour when decent folk would have been eating breakfast, my patience broke and I exclaimed, "Can't you stop talking and go to sleep?"

In an astonished and hurt voice, my companion replied, "Of course, I should like to go to sleep, but it would be bad manners. I was only talking so that you should not be bored or think that I was. Silence means boredom."

I believe that this attitude to silence is one of the main difficulties of Anglo-American understanding. Mr. Scarborough speaks of "the old superiority complex" of this country. There is, of course, no such complex known to psychology. It is merely the outward and visible sign of the inferiority complex which makes a man bumptious and overbearing, just because he is secretly convinced of inferiority. It leads to such expressions as "God's own country" and pathetic efforts to persuade the

world that a one-horse town is the hub of the universe. Jingos—we have had lots of them—want to hit first, because they are afraid of being hit, and that is why they always complain that their country is going to the dogs.

The Englishman may be aggravatingly and stupidly self-sufficient even now. Yet it is not a bad thing that he appreciates silence and likes to withdraw into himself without feeling a perpetual impulse to submit his ideas and opinions to the judgment of someone else.

In his review of post-war England, Mr. Scarborough is scrupulously just. His very reasonable annoyance at the muddle-headed way in which so much of our work is done is tempered by a profound respect for the "vast, stolid, patient, unimaginative tolerance" of the British workman. Our weather is the cruellest thorn in his side. It is not so much that it is always raining, but that it always looks as if it is just going to rain.

Our objection to central heating, the discomfort of our houses, and the want of labour-saving appliances, he accepts more in sorrow than in anger and it is very rare indeed to catch him out in a mistake. The only error I have observed was the pardonable slip of converting Chesterton's "The Man who was Thursday" into "The Man who was Friday."

Pots and Kettles

Mr. Scarborough twits us pleasantly with the contradictions of our Constitution, which are "confusing to statesmen who never are sure just how much of the Empire they may have concluded a treaty with." Perhaps that confusion may be set against the puzzlement of Europe when the American Senate repudiated President Wilson and the Versailles Treaty. No doubt in the case of the United States, it is all down in writing, but even so the negotiation of treaties with that Republic does not rank among the easiest accomplishments of statescraft.

Very wisely our author welcomes the abandonment of that dangerous phrase "a war between England and the United States is unthinkable." As he remarks, the declaration proves that someone in reality has thought about it. His conclusion will be echoed by all who believe in Anglo-American friendship:

"Undoubtedly occasions will arise when the American and the Englishman, finding themselves on opposite sides, will be tempted to act in the light of the accumulated misinformation of history. Just as certainly there will be other circumstances in which, with every apparent justification for antagonism, the Englishman and the American will, to the bewilderment of the world, go off and have a drink together. The hope may be permitted that the latter occasions will, despite the Eighteenth Amendment, predominate. For we are really very like each other—particularly in our inconsistencies."

H. W. A.

NEW NOVELS

Ebb and Flood. James Hanley. Bodley Head. 7s. 6d.

Ambrose Terring. Hartley Kemball Cook. Nicholson & Watson. 7s. 6d.

A Lady so Innocent. Herbert Adams. Methuen. 7s. 6d.

Hot Water. P. G. Wodehouse. Jenkins. 7s. 6d.

The Clever Ones. R. Raleigh King. Palmer. 7s. 6d.

MR. Hanley's new novel is a little unusual—for Mr. Hanley. He seems to be trying to soften the blows with which normally he batters his stories into us. In this study of three docker boys, he turns to what I might call the more legitimate uses of literature to produce his effects, and instead of relying almost entirely on the forces of vivid description, he has studied the psychological and emotional reactions between his characters. Indeed, in his treatment of the three boys and especially in the passages between Condrion and his deaf and dumb mother, he has brought a rare skill to his writing that impresses one the more when considering his previous novels.

Mr. Hanley's former work has been indicative to some extent of a distinctly big future. "Ebb and Flood" seems to be the beginning of this expectation, a novel into which considerable thought and a more tolerant outlook have gone towards the making. It is by no means a superlative book—far from it—but it shows more balance and a keener technique.

A Step Forward

The brutality is curbed and he scores his successes with a finer turn of phrasing than has been noticeable before. His characterisation has more subtlety and what the book loses in brute force it more than gains in virility of outlook and a reasoned sanity of presentation. Many people, I fancy, are likely to consider that with this book Mr. Hanley's prestige will suffer. They will be disappointed to find that the starkness and grim hopelessness of his former work is absent. But they will be wrong in not recognising that a big step forward towards better things has been taken.

Ambrose Terring was the son of a bookseller in the town of Chelvington. He was also an active Socialist. And, through a *mésalliance* some three or four generations before his time, he was the heir presumptive to the title of Lord Chelvington with its staunch conservative principles. The castle, hereditary seat of the Lords Chelvington, dominated the town both by situation and by principle, and its park, known locally as the Chelvington Lung, was a bone of contention between the townspeople and the castle people.

With Ambrose being the next in succession, it looked as though the old tradition of aloofness would pass and the people of Chelvington get their "lung." But Ambrose does not move fast enough

to satisfy the more revolutionary body of feeling and his position of left-wing adviser is usurped by a Communist agitator who stirs up old grievances to such an extent that he is able to lead an attack on the castle. Ambrose attempts to reason with them, but he is injured by the mob and dies as a result. The future Lord Chevington, still a boy, is addicted to cricket and therefore, presumably, fairly harmless.

Narrow Confines

This is not a book which is likely to have a very wide appeal. Unless humourously treated, local politics in a novel seldom carry much conviction, and though Mr. Cook has blended fairly skilfully all the shades of political doctrine from hide-bound conservatism to revolutionary communism, his book does not emerge from the obscurity which limits the importance of local politics in the wider point of view of the general public. And since the story depends on these self-same politics, one's interest is apt to flag fairly early on and never really revives.

The Lady so Innocent was Catherine of Braganza, wife of Charles II. Mr. Adams has taken her unhappy story and around it has woven a romance with a background of historical fact. It is by no means a historical novel in the strict sense of the word, though we meet in its pages, Titus Oates and a few other worthies. It is light reading and pleasant, and well worth slipping into a suitcase to while away an hour or so of the holidays.

Hot Water is pure farce. And Mr. Wodehouse is too well known for any reasoned criticism to be necessary. Suffice it to say that this new book is written in the true Wodehouse style and that it goes merrily on through the most absurd adventures and situations until the painful end is reached. "Painful" refers to the reader's ribs, not the book.

Little Plot but Some Humour

"The Clever Ones" is quite a clever story on rather unconventional lines. Mr. King takes a well-known Academy of Dramatic Art and makes a couple of terms spent in working there the background of his novel. There is little enough of plot and a large part of the humour is found in caricatures or portraits of actual people, living or dead. And when we come to the persons of his drama we find them all the conventional puppets of the art of fiction.

Never mind, Mr. King has very agreeably the graces of wit and humour and the art of the chuckle.

His book begins well and never relapses so far as to become a bore, even if its chapters have unequal merit. Indeed it is so good in many ways that careless grammatical errors, missing parts of sentences, and actual misspellings are the more irritating. Mr. King can, and probably will do something very much better than this or his previous work. He is not at all to be disregarded, for he has style and personality.

THE MONASTIC CRAFTSMAN

The Monastic Craftsman. By R. E. Swartwout, M.Litt., Cambridge. W. Heffer & Sons.

THIS book is an attempt to elucidate a fascinating problem: How far were medieval monks their own architects and artists? Perhaps the author underrates the knowledge of his readers when he says that monks are popularly supposed to have built all their churches, made all their works of art, written and illuminated all their books. Such a theory cannot at all events be held by anybody who is at all familiar with late mediaeval art; the names of many artists of the 14th and 15th centuries are known and nearly all are laymen, though even then there were some monkish artists, such as John Siferwas, the Dominican friar who, in the early 15th century, illuminated the gorgeous and gigantic manuscript known as the Sherborne Missal.

But it has been generally held that in the early Middle Ages things were very different, and that before 1200 most art workers were monks. The great English schools of illuminators and the great English monasteries shared the same towns—Winchester, Durham, Bury St. Edmunds, St. Albans—and the beautiful German art-work of the 11th and 12th centuries is so closely associated with the great abbeys that it is known as *Klosterarbeit*—monastic work. From this period too we have a number of names of clerical artists, as for example the German monk Theophilus who wrote a treatise on art, and Anketil of St. Albans, a skilful goldsmith. At an earlier period we read of Tuotilo of St. Gall, who was musician as well as artist, and the great St. Dunstan who was famous as a metal worker.

Evidence of this kind leaves Mr. Swartwout unmoved. He does not deny that there were monkish artists at all periods, but he claims that they were always less numerous than laymen. He points out that art work was not encouraged by monastic legislation, that the great Cistercian order in particular was as hostile to ecclesiastical art as any Scottish Puritan, while even the more liberal rules gave only grudging recognition to the art worker, the 'artes' enjoined by St. Benedict being such useful crafts as baking, brewing and shoe-making. In a very interesting chapter he shows the words 'fecit' or 'aedificavit' in a chronicle must not be taken to mean that a monk or abbot personally made a work of art or designed a church, for they are often used in the Vulgate and elsewhere in the sense of 'fieri' or 'aedificari jussit.' Further, Mr. Swartwout gives reason to doubt whether art work was ever much taught in monastic schools, and proves the inaccuracy of many modern eulogies of monastic craftsmen.

One such blunder incidentally illustrates the difference between medieval and modern points of

view. Professor Baldwin Brown alleged that Bede speaks of a man as a 'zealous monastic craftsman.' On looking up the reference, Mr. Swartwout found that what Bede really said was that the man was a drunkard, addicted to other unlawful (and unspecified) pleasures, and finally—crowning and most unexpected wickedness—that he would rather stay night and day in his workshop than go to church! He died in torments, describing to the horrified brethren the flames and demons which beset him, and Mr. Swartwout adds in a footnote that this disreputable character, this impious, incorrigible and indefatigable worker, was probably not a monk at all but a servant of the monastery! So much for the 'zealous monastic craftsman' of Professor Baldwin Brown.

How far does Mr. Swartwout prove his case? Most clearly, perhaps, as regards architecture; it is inherently improbable that many monks had the necessary technical ability and professional experience to design the beautiful cathedrals and abbeys of the Middle Ages. It is more probable *a priori*, and there is more positive evidence, that many of the goldsmiths and illuminators of the Early Middle Ages were monks; and if these art workers departed to some extent from the strict monastic ideal which made the saving of a monk's soul by prayer and worship the most important business of a monk's life, the fact should not surprise us. Monks departed in so many directions from the strait and narrow path that an occasional deviation towards artistic activity is as natural as to most modern minds it is admirable.

G. D. HOBSON.

FOR AMATEUR ACTORS

The Improvised Stage. By Marjorie Somerscales. Sir Isaac Pitman & Sons. 5s. net.

THIS is a practical and most charming guide for amateur performers of plays who have artistic ambitions and little cash. It specially aims at being of service to those about to venture on costume productions and shows how everything required for them on the stage, with the solitary exception of a sword blade, can be made as Miss Somerscales says, "with the simplest tools, such as scissors and needle, hammer and nails, knife, and glue."

The chapters on lighting, colour, and the general effect of clothes are admirable. But so indeed is the whole of this slim, well got-up book, and its profuse illustrations that are as distinguished as useful. There is an appendix on the cost of clothes, showing how a man's costume can be made for 5s. 2½d., a woman's for 6s. 8d., and an angel's for 5s. 10d. *The Improvised Stage* should be in the hands of every amateur producer in the country. It has the makings of a classic.

A SCATHING ATTACK

Hitler. By Emil Lengyel. G. Routledge & Sons. 7s. 6d. net.

THE gentle reader might imagine that the German National Socialist leader would form a serious, if not gloomy, subject for a book. In the hands of Mr. Emil Lengyel it becomes as merry as a grig.

This book does not in the least answer the question printed on its jacket: "Where is Germany going?" nor does it attempt to. Neither is much fresh light thrown on the reasons of Hitler's astounding success. The son of a pompous Austrian customs official of infinitesimal importance, Adolf Hitler, beginning life as a bricklayer's assistant, is now one of the great of this world. His word is law to millions. Mr. Lengyel's bright and colloquial biography shows Hitler to be a man of shallow, trite mind, wholly without originality, with no ideas of his own and few of anybody else's, and only remarkable by an astonishing power of spouting words and a brazen belief in himself.

A spellbinder without real eloquence, Hitler, one is driven to infer, owes his sorcery as a tub-thumping orator to the fact that the minds of his thousand audiences are as empty and half-baked as his own. "The most logical practitioner of insanity," is one German judgment on him quoted by Mr. Lengyel, but neither insanity nor yet logic are demonstrated by Hitler's words or career. A better phrase is that of an old general spoken when Hitler was already on the road to triumph: "ein tüchtiger kerl." Mr. Lengyel gives this in English as "a regular fellow," but "a card" in the sense of Mr. Arnold Bennett's hero would come nearer the mark.

This Hitler certainly is, for he has the instinct of what things will come off with the crowd, and herein probably lies the secret of his rise from the fiasco of 1924 that laid him low in ridicule to his position to-day. Hitler's "sales technique," says Mr. Lengyel, "his articulateness, fluency and self assurance" in passing off so poor a stock of political ideas on the public account for much of his success. He knows the abysmally low common denominator of mass intelligence and his own mind is perfectly in tune with it. Devoid of greatness, his power is great because of the time he lives in, and because the German people adores a platform dictator who will order them about with the gestures of a Caesar. "Let sanity return to Germany," says Mr. Lengyel, "and Hitler will be a national god on half-pension." Mr. Lengyel's English is breezy. His views, at least, are sane, and his book should be a *vade mecum* to all in search of a vivid picture of the latest German political conditions.

PULSATING PEASANT GLORIES

Russian Heroic Poetry. By N. Kershaw Chadwick. Camb. Univ. Press. 15s. net.

TO those who can hear it spoken, Russian poetry is a flame of beauty. If you read it to yourself you must, to get its full flavour, read it aloud or, at least, since few of us are capable of pronouncing Russian well enough, read it with

more than half your mind fixed on its sensuous qualities.

Russian is essentially a vocal language, whether this be the cause or the effect of Russians being the tremendous talkers that they are; therefore it is at its best when spoken, and when woven into the patterns of liquid sound of which Russian verse consist glows like molten gold.

This sensuousness, that in English can only be paralleled, though in a lesser degree, in certain poems of Dryden and Keats, is also the reason why as a rule the simplest and most native among Russian poetry is the best. No country owns such a magnificent storehouse of popular epic poetry as Russia.

In the book under review Miss Kershaw Chadwick has collected and translated a fine selection of Russian heroic poems, *byling*, which had their origin in the expressive French phrase, *in la nuit des temps*, came to their apogee in the age of Ivan the Terrible, and burst forth again for short periods under Peter the Great and in the Napoleonic era.

Like all original epic poetry, these ballads were written and sung by wandering minstrels, to whose activity is due much of the national spirit of Russia as we knew it down to fifteen years ago. We may be sure that Miss Chadwick is right when she says in her preface that it still exists under the surface: "the people and the nature of the country remain unchanged." She might have added in support of her view that Russia came through the stress of the Tartar domination of some two and a half centuries, retarded by it indeed, but not crushed or destroyed, and there is every reason to expect that the tyranny of her modern Tartars will not, in the long run, have a more devastating effect.

No one, it is evident, but a great poet could translate these pulsating peasant glories into a foreign language and preserve their fiery swing. Miss Chadwick does not attempt to do so, but supplies an excellently readable version full of curious glimpses into the burning, yet plastic soul of the people of whom and for whom the *byling* were born.

It would be mere cavilling to pick at minor points (why for instance does she translate *kasha* as "gruel", a horrid word, or think it necessary to say in a redundant note that *pésn* means "song"?). Her book is an admirable and important work on a little known subject that we are grateful for the opportunity of knowing better.

THE STATUS OF WOMEN

The Ill-Fated Princess: The Life of Charlotte, Daughter of the Prince Regent, by Dr. G. J. Renier. Davies. 8s. 6d.

Women's Place in Industry and Home, by Sylvia Anthony. Routledge. 10s. 6d.

THESE two books form an interesting composite picture of the status of women in modern times. The one is a study of a woman whose birth was her only claim to importance; the other is a brave attempt to deal with woman's fight for economic and intellectual equality with man, an inevitable result of the industrial system.

an inevitable manifestation of the economic revolution consequent upon the Great War.

The Princess Charlotte was one of the great might-have-beens of history. If greed, intrigue, envy, hatred, malice and political opportunism had not conspired to prevent her marrying the Prince of Orange, if she had not married Prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg-Saalfeld, and had not been bled to death in childbirth by the "best" doctors of the period, there might have been no Queen Victoria and no Victorian Age. And in that case, who can say what might have been the status of women to-day? True, economics are often stronger than dynasties, but dynasties have tremendous psychological forces, the extent of which it is impossible to measure. It is a remarkable and little-known fact that in the 40 years previous to 1921 the number of women gainfully employed *decreased*.

Dr. Renier tells the story of this Princess, whose hieretic importance was so tremendous and whose personality was so hopelessly cramped by her parents and her upbringing, with sympathy, and places her in true perspective against the pregnant political events of her day. He leaves one with a feeling almost of dismay at the inscrutable workings of fate. Charlotte was never allowed to be more than a puppet, poor lady, but those who pulled the strings that controlled her life were moving greater forces than they knew.

If Charlotte had had a personality big enough to overcome the handicaps of her upbringing, if she had been wise enough to see through Brougham and the other politicians, if she had been able to manage her boulder of a father, her unfortunate mother whom she so closely resembled, if she, "the most interesting member of the family," had only had a measure of ordinary luck As it is, her influence on posterity was little of her own making, and her tomb is a marble monstrosity that is fit herald to a period of material greatness and artistic dilapidation. Her bones are well and truly anchored. But where is her spirit? Both are forgotten. And yet, in many ways, she was so "modern."

In the meantime, a very different state of affairs has been achieved. Superficially. Mainly as a result of their work during the Great War, women have obtained the unquestioned right of entering almost every trade and profession. Even physical handicaps have not prevented them from competing with men in almost every form of industrial and professional life.

But the great question of equality still remains unsolved. (And it is too much talked about.) On the whole women do not receive equal wages for equal work. On the whole, women in industry tend to lower the level of pay. On the whole, theirs is the routine work. They are still the hewers of wood and drawers of water in the industrial machine, though they do not now do the actual hard physical labour which they were accustomed to do in the past, and their pay has improved.

Mrs. Anthony's study is thorough and sound and fulfills an important need. She raises many

questions, and some of her facts and suggestions are both valuable and staggering. On occasion she writes with humour and quotes aptly, thus making her book both interesting and readable.

But her conclusions lead one to suspect that women still have a very long way to go on the road to equality and that, given the chance, one would still choose to be born a boy. There seems to be a greater affinity between women of to-day and the forgotten Princess Charlotte than between the women of to-day and those of the "Victorian Age" which first began the exhausting modern discussion of and legislation for "female labour."

Somehow this seems wrong. We owe so much to our legislators. Still more perhaps to our own efforts. But the hand that rocks the cradle . . .

M. SCOTT JOHNSTON.

DRY AS DUST

A Poet's Tragedy. By A. Hemming-Sjöberg. Translated by E. Classen. Allen & Unwin. 8s. 6d.

THE story of the downfall of C. J. L. Almquist, a Swedish novelist and poet, may appeal with tragic force to those acquainted with his works. To those who, like the reviewer, have to take them for granted on the strength of the introduction to this book, his ruin scarcely deserves the name of a pinchbeck tragedy; it is just a sordid and rather boring business. The police reports provide us daily with stories of crime and human weakness more thrilling than this book. Why it should have been translated into English is a puzzle.

The author certainly appears to have proved his case to the hilt; there seems not a shadow of doubt that Almquist was a swindler and only not a murderer because he was too clumsy to poison effectually the miser to whom he owed money. All the dry bones of this dismal affair now eighty years old are unearthed and if the reader has patience he will be able to plough through pages and pages of detail, which prove the wretched poet's guilt. It cannot be said that some episodic essays in psychology will help him on his way, for they are mad-deningly commonplace and elementary. The psychological explanation of Almquist is given in his portrait which forms the frontispiece. He has fear in his eyes, fear written on his face, and it needs no expert to trace his melancholy career to fear.

No doubt there was a tragedy to be made from his life, if the author had been equal to the task, but he is as the publisher informs us a trained jurist and is careful not to use his matter as an artist would. There were possibilities for the novelist in Almquist's curious trick of preparing his explanation and defence of his crimes in writing before they were committed and then leaving the tell-tale documents about the place. He could not think without a pen in his hand. This unfortunate failing might be effective in a well-contrived detective story, but it loses its point when it only serves to confirm the obvious. The wretched Almquist escaped to America—he was in those days liable to the death penalty for an unsuccessful attempt at poisoning—and paid for his crimes by a bigamous marriage with an aged boarding-house keeper of Philadelphia.

CORRESPONDENCE

Lord Milner's Prophecy

SIR,—In June 1920 I sent Lord Milner a copy of a letter which I had written to the *Times* protesting against the policy of restricting credit. In reply I received the following letter:—

"Many thanks for the copy of your letter to 'The Times.' I hope they will publish it, but I am not sure that 'The Times' is not on the wrong side in this matter. Whether they publish it or not, I can personally make good use of it.

"Needless to say I agree with you. Somehow or other we always seem to agree on these industrial and economic questions. Did I not say months ago, in the House of Lords, when there was all that rotten talk about ruin and bankruptcy, the burden of the debt, etc. etc., that 'the one thing which terrified me in looking ahead was the fear of the possibility of a restriction of credit.' I always knew this mad nonsense would come. But I hope the protests of the business community will check it before it goes too far. Hitherto perhaps not much mischief has resulted, for somehow or other the mania for speculation had to be checked, though there certainly ought to be better ways of checking it than by measures which hit legitimate business at the same time.

"My difficulty about all these questions is that I am not supposed to be an authority about them, nor do I claim to be an expert except in so far as commonsense and long experience may make one. But I am up against theories strongly entrenched in the Treasury, the Bank and certainly the greater part of the whole banking world, and supported by tons of literature from the abstract school of political economists who have held this country in their baneful grip for nearly a century. It would take a man's whole time to get up a really effective case against such a formidable combination, and, as a matter of fact, my time is almost wholly occupied with work of a different kind—Imperial and foreign questions, with regard to which, I believe I am regarded as something of an authority.

"I do what little I can, but I am afraid you have in me a loyal but weak ally.

Yours very truly,
MILNER."

It is clear from this letter that Lord Milner accurately foresaw what would happen if we were foolish enough to restrict credit. The letter is extraordinarily prophetic though written 12 years ago. His warning was unheeded and ever since the Bank of England and the Treasury have pursued relentlessly the very policy which he so strongly deprecated:

1. By restricting the issue of currency notes.
2. By the return to the Gold Standard.
3. By the amalgamation of the Treasury notes and Bank of England notes.

What Lord Milner was terrified to contemplate has come about, and the world is now in a terrible state with something like 30,000,000 people unemployed in America and Europe alone.

Let professors, financiers, and bankers say what they will, this restriction of credit is the root cause of all our present terrible unemployment. Surely the wise thing to do is to retrace our steps. Admittedly it must be a world movement, for in no other way would the necessary confidence be obtained. I suggest that there is one comparatively simple way in which the position can be retrieved—let the principal central banks come together and by agreement reduce by a certain percentage the amount of gold they now keep as cover against notes in circula-

tion. The minimum reserves of gold are to-day fixed by law and vary in different countries. In the Interim Report of the Gold Delegation Committee of the League of Nations, the following occurs:—

"This minimum is largely conventional, and considerable economy could quite certainly be accomplished were the current accepted minima reduced. We believe that this could be done without in any way weakening the general credit structure."

If these legal minima could be reduced by, say, 20 per cent. to 25 per cent. a great increase in purchasing power would result throughout the world.

If all the central banks agreed, people would realise all over the world that the fall in prices had come to an end and that they would tend to rise; consequently that confidence which is essential would be restored and everybody would begin to buy, just in the same way as when Sir Austen Chamberlain announced in the House that the issue of currency notes was going to be restricted, people, afraid of being caught with high-priced stocks, immediately cancelled their orders and the slump began.

Unless something is done, and done soon, to increase the purchasing power of the world, there will be nothing but chaos and revolution in front of us. You cannot have 30,000,000 people unemployed, sitting down and quietly acquiescing in the position.

The Bristol Pottery,
Fishponds, Bristol.

T. B. JOHNSTON.

"Real Prison Reform"

SIR,—It is not often that I am displeased with any of your comments on current topics, they so frequently show such a lack of bias and so sane an outlook that they are a treat to read. The paragraph "Real Prison Reform" in this week's issue does call for a few words, however.

It was sad to see your suggestion that the recent appointment of a new Chairman of the Prison Commissioners is a sign of a new policy. The new appointment was necessary owing to Mr. Maxwell, the former chairman, being promoted to the office of Deputy Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department and not in order to institute real prison reform. Mr. Maxwell has long been looked upon as one of the world's best authorities on prison administration.

"Sop-and-sentiment has dangerously overshoot the mark" refers, I suppose, to the riot at Dartmoor last January. Whatever the drawbacks of a reformatory policy, indeed, whatever the cause of the failure in the system at Dartmoor, it may safely be said that it was *not* laxity in any form that accounted for the trouble. Anybody who knows Mr. Roberts and yet is ignorant of prison administration could be sure of that. Borstal, of course, is still experimental, admittedly. And the ideal Governor is perhaps a sort of psycho-military man; whether there would be an abundance of perfect governors if the salaries for those posts were increased is debatable. In any case, is there really sufficient reason for believing that the *average* prison governor is below the required standard?

I hope you can see your way to printing this in order to counteract to some small degree the sickening jargon we are continually having from the popular press—and also for the sake of fair play!

ALAN STEVENS.

Maple Durham,
Springfield Park, Horsham, Sussex.

Woman to Woman

SIR,—Assuming that "A Woman Reader" has not herself fallen a victim to the tendencies which she deprecates one can safely conclude that clarity of expression and thought is in no way a corollary of a pure mind.

Nothing is more difficult than giving a lucid comment on a confused statement, but I feel it necessary to point out that history has shown no connection between political safety and nakedness.

Apart, however, from this I should like in reply to make two definite statements. Firstly that the cult of the healthy body is worth while in itself, and secondly that it cannot be shown that either geographically or historically morality is markedly affected by the percentage of skin covered.

Women encourage the cult of the beauty of their bodies because it is in accord with an age where beauty of all kinds is becoming increasingly appreciated and which slowly but surely is overcoming the horrors of the Victorian age and applying to convention the standard not of prejudice but of balanced reason.

HYGIENICALLY-CLAD-AND-MORAL.

French and German Armies

SIR,—I am honoured that my humble letter on the above subject has called forth a reply from so formidable an antagonist as Mr. C. F. Melville, but, although his indictment of Germany runs to such an impressive length, I see no reason to alter my opinion that the spectre of concealed German military strength is founded on hypotheses which are untenable in the light of facts.

Mr. Melville gives a list of Germany's "illicit reserves," which includes Customs officials, railway police and civilian employees of the military establishment. But Customs officials and the rest of Mr. Melville's queerly assorted crew are not confined to Germany; they exist in every civilised state, and could as well be employed in a future war by Germany's enemies as by Germany.

The Stahlhelm is an organisation of ex-service men, and would be about as useful in warfare as its counterpart over here, the British Legion.

Does Mr. Melville, when considering the putative military strength of this country, take account of such organisations as the Rover Scouts, the Veterans' Corps and the British Fascists? Military and semi-military organisations exist in nearly every country, but any practical soldier knows that there is an immense difference between the member of such an organisation, however keen he may be, and the soldier who has undergone the very strenuous and technical training needed to fit him for the conduct of modern warfare.

The intercourse between Germany and Russia of which Mr. Melville speaks was confined to a few isolated acts which occurred some years ago, but with the recent conclusion of Franco-Russian and Polish-Russian Pacts, it is obvious that the relations between Germany and Russia have undergone a radical change. It is interesting to note in this connection that "The Times" stated on August 6th: "In the last few days the Soviet Press has adopted a distinctly new tone towards Germany, obviously in connection with recent political events there and the expectation of a changed policy towards Moscow," and that the largest individual party in Germany to-day is nothing if not anti-Marxist and anti-Bolshevik.

It is true that individual German officers have served in the Russian and other foreign armies, but Mr. Melville appears to forget that a large number of these men were turned adrift at the conclusion of the war and were forced to accept whatever billets they could to save themselves from starvation. As to German missions having been in association with the Russian army, such interchange of military experts is not at all an uncommon matter with other nations, and British military missions have frequently assisted in the training of foreign armies.

It is curious that the one book Mr. Melville refers us to is a production of the German Social Democratic Party.

W. J. CHAMBERS.

19, Auriol Road, Barons Court, W.14.

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CITY

LOMBARD STREET, *Thursday.*

The result of the War Loan Conversion scheme has been hailed in the City with considerable satisfaction. It is regarded as a tribute to Mr. Chamberlain for his foresight and courage in launching the scheme when he did, and it is rightly considered a magnificent response on the part of the public to the call of the Government to help the nation through its difficulties. It is up to the Government now to see that the confidence of the public is not misplaced and that every thing possible is done and done quickly to bring about such further economies in the National expenditure as will ensure early relief to the long suffering taxpayer.

Coming New Issue Revival

As the autumn approaches the possibility of a revival of new capital issues is being discussed. Some there are who argue that with trade so depressed there is no demand for fresh capital. Others take the view that after years of starvation many industrial concerns are feeling the want of capital resources and are only waiting for the removal of the embargo placed on new issues during the War Loan Conversion campaign to place their needs before the public.

It must be recognised, too, that bankers have been assisting trade to an abnormal extent during the slowdown that has been so long in progress and that these loans have to be liquidated at the earliest possible moment. Apart, therefore, from the fact that quite a number of companies are desirous of converting their high interest bearing debentures into those carrying a lower rate of interest now that money is cheap, there seems every prospect, assuming the present embargo is lifted, that the autumn will see a recrudescence of new capital issues on quite a large scale.

Railway Optimism

The rise in commodity prices has had a stimulating effect on the market for Home Railway stocks. The idea, of course, is that better commodity prices presage a recovery in trade in which the railways would be among the first to benefit. Trade activity may yet be a long way off and even when it comes its effect may not be immediately apparent in railway traffic returns. All the same it cannot be denied that prices had fallen to an unduly low level and this being recognised it is not surprising that speculative interest in the market has revived and that quotations are recovering. There are many who will prefer to wait until the outlook is clearer before buying railway stocks; but those who share the view that trade is on the mend and who are prepared to face ups and downs in the next few months, may be inclined to buy now and put their shares away for the better times that must inevitably be experienced sooner or later.

Safety First

For the safety first investor the prior-charge stocks of those Home Railway companies which still remain in the Trustee or Chancery lists seem to be worth consideration. As an instance Great Western 4 per cent. First Debenture can be bought at about 97½ at which figure a yield of £4 2s 6d. per cent. is obtainable. On last year's earnings there was a margin of over £4,000,000 in excess of all Debenture requirements of the company and as the stock mentioned holds premier position the question of safety need cause no anxiety. Next in order of merit is the 2½ per cent. Debenture stock of the same company. This is priced at around 60 to yield a purchaser £4 3s. 9d. per cent.

It is not easy to find investments of this character to give so good a return and the only explanation seems to be that Trustees and others have been disinclined to touch railway stock of any kind while the industry remained in its present state of depression.

Cotton Hopes

The improved statistical position of the raw cotton industry has brought into the limelight the shares of the Sudan Plantations Syndicate, Ltd. This company has had a good crop year and is expected to benefit greatly from the higher cotton prices now ruling. This may not be reflected in the next accounts which cover the year to June last; but hopes are running high that within a shorter time than was recently expected the company will once again enter the dividend list. Last year the shareholders got nothing; but for 1929-30 they received 10 per cent., and for each of the two preceding years the rate of distribution was 25 per cent. The price of the £1 shares is about 28s.

Fly in the Ointment

With the prospect of a rise in petrol prices more interest has been taken in the Oil share market and at one time quotations were lifted quite substantially. Early optimism has, however, given place to less hopeful views of the oil situation. The fly in the ointment is Russia. That country, it will be recollected, was not represented at the recent Paris conference when a tentative agreement was reached regarding output. It is hoped that Soviet Russia will send delegates to the forthcoming conference in New York; but whether they will see eye to eye with the other oil producers is another matter. Russia, indeed, seems bent on consolidating her already strong position in the oil industry. She has just come to an agreement with a French syndicate, so it is reported, for the exclusive supply of half a million tons of crude oil annually for six years. A similar arrangement has been made with Turkey and yet another is being negotiated with Germany. If all this is true the possibility of universal agreement to curtail output is not very hopeful as the Russian delegates will go to New York with little wish to sacrifice these agreements.

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The "Saturday Review" Suggests This Week:

[We hope that this page will keep our readers in touch with the best of the Theatre, Film, and Wireless programmes, of the week.—ED.]

Next Week's Broadcasting

Programmes have been so hopelessly uneven of late that it is becoming increasingly difficult to spot the likely winners with any degree of certainty. Generally speaking it is safe to assume that the probable merit of any programme is in inverse ratio to the boast and ballyhoo devoted to it in the official organ of the B.B.C.

It was certainly so in the case of "As You Like it," in which the mis-casting referred to last week was only too evident. The beauty of the poetry was entirely lost by every member of the cast, with the possible exception of Rosalind, while at least one important character was quite unembarrassed by any knowledge of the meaning of the words he was mouthing. It cannot be too strongly urged on the Productions Director that this sort of production simply will not do. Drama must be taken more seriously or it were better to hand over the programme space it occupies to the Music Department.

In these circumstances it will be prudent only to bet on certainties next week. The Promenade concerts are continued every day at 8 p.m., on Monday, Wednesday and Friday on the National wavelength, and Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday on the Regional wavelength.

The Foundations of music are devoted each evening at 6.30 to Beethoven's Songs, which are to be sung by George Parker. Mr. Parker is at his best in this type of programme, and his best is very good indeed.

At 10 p.m. on August 22nd (National), Miss Stella Benson talks on "An Ignoramus in Macao." Miss Benson cannot fail to be interesting.

Ashley Sterne and A. A. Thomson may make "Grand Slam" on August 26th at 8.15 p.m. (Regional), and August 27th at 8.55 p.m. (National), but life is full of disappointments.

But if it is a question of "Safety First" there is always Commander Stephen King-Hall in the Children's Hour on Friday at 5.35 with his weekly summary of current events, "Here and There."

Theatres and Films

Theatres

"Behold, We Live." By John Van Druten. 8.30, Wed. and Sat. 2.30. This is a play in which very little happens; and the little that does happen, happens very quietly and un-theatrically. That, of course, is Mr. Van Druten's own peculiar style of play-writing, and hitherto it has been, on the whole, more or less successful. Why it fails in this particular instance, cannot be adequately explained in a brief note; briefly, however, the fact is that his plot requires a more dramatic treatment. It is the story of the tragic love-affair of Sarah Casanove and Gordon Evers, K.C., whose wife refuses to divorce him. There is also the underlying theme (a potentially dramatic one, but in this case insufficiently developed) of the K.C.'s choice between romance and the rewards of his professional career.

In deliberately neglecting opportunities for "theatre," the author verges now and then on dullness; for he seems, in this case, to have nothing to offer in substitution. However, one or two scenes (for instance, when her lover tells Sarah that he is about to have an operation which may possibly prove fatal) are intensely dramatic and immensely moving; and there are occasional delightful irrelevancies. And if the play is seldom exciting, it is more or less continuously interesting. The acting

might be better. Perhaps it will be, when the weather becomes cooler.—*St. James's Theatre.*

Films

Jack's the Boy. A good rollicking farce with music. Jack Hulbert and Cicely Courtneidge. *Tivoli.*

One Hour with You. Not very good Lubitsch, but amusing and light. Maurice Chevalier and Jeanette Macdonald. *Carlton.*

Der Hauptmann von Koepenick. Based on the famous hoax. A very good picture, indeed. German dialogue with English sub-titles. *Cambridge.*

Westfront 1918. Revival of Mr. Pabst's great war picture. *Academy.*

Kamet Conquered. The Himalayan Expedition. *Polytechnic.*

Thark. Another of the Aldwych farces. Ralph Lynn and Tom Walls. *New Gallery.*

General Releases

Kriss, The Sword of Death. Played by the natives of Bali in the Dutch East Indies. An interesting picture.

The Frightened Lady. From the play of Edgar Wallace. Good entertainment.